

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

*Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 7 with the following amended paragraph:*

**FIGURE 3** illustrates a first application of the present invention to ~~wireless communication~~local area networking.

*Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 9 with the following amended paragraph:*

**FIGURE 4** illustrates a second application of the present invention to ~~local-area networking~~wireless communication.

*Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:*

In one embodiment, upon determining that the shared resource has become available (i.e. accessible) after having been unavailable for a period of time, clients incorporating the teachings of the present invention delay for an ~~addition~~additional period of time (referred to herein as a second back off interval) before reattempting to access the shared resource. In one embodiment, the second back off period is decreased each time the client successfully accesses the shared resource. Accordingly, through the continual increment and decrement of client back off intervals, the present invention incurs the additional benefit of dynamically tuning overall system load in the case of overloaded shared resources. That is, the present invention is further beneficial in circumstances where the shared resource experiences a higher client load than the shared resource can sustain.